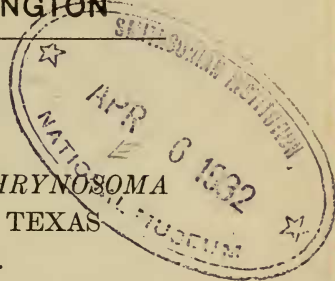


PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON

THE STATUS OF THE HORNED LIZARD *PHRYNOSOMA*
BREVICORNIS, DESCRIBED FROM TEXAS
BY E. G. BOULENGER (1916).

BY CHARLES E. BURT.¹



During the course of a number of studies involving various series of horned lizards collected in the Middle West, especially those of Texas, I have constantly looked for an individual showing the characters of *Phrynosoma brevicornis*, which was described by E. G. Boulenger from an unknown locality in Texas in 1916; and during an extensive survey of the literature (preparatory to a phylogenetic revision of the genus) I have been unable to relegate it to the synonymy of any of the described species of *Phrynosoma*. This condition of affairs has led me to write to Mr. H. W. Parker of the British Museum of Natural History for further information concerning the type specimen. In reply to my inquiry pertaining to the exact condition of the occipital horns and other details, Mr. Parker has kindly written as follows:

"On examining the median occipital horns to see whether there was any sign of mutilation, I found that the whole top of the head was covered with dried mucus and sand. On removing this I found that the 'spines' had the form of a low rounded hump, covered with granules and surrounded at the base on the posterior side by a ring of enlarged flat scales. Further the lateral occipital horns were worn down or broken off, and their exposed surfaces were similar to the median prominences. Then I noticed that the whole of the head, from the middle of the eyes, was flat on top and covered with the same small granular units, quite unlike the snout which has irregularly rugose scales. A large patch on the dorsum, on the left side in front of the sacrum, has a similar worn and granular appearance; also, there are other spots of the same nature on the back and neck. I have

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very little doubt that these patches are abrasions, and once this possibility is admitted, there is no reliable way of determining the amount of actual substance that has been worn away. The fore part of the snout is perfect, so that when I attempted to find a species that would agree with the *certain* characters of the snout and ventral surface (as well as with the locality) of *brevicornis* I was led to select what we identify as *P. cornutum* from Texas. That *brevicornis* is based on a pathological individual I have no doubt, and I strongly suspect that it is none other than *P. cornutum*."

Specific information about the type of *P. brevicornis*, as transmitted by Mr. Parker, may be summarized as follows: nostrils well above the superciliary ridge, less than 3 mm. apart; nasal scales separated by only three internasals;² ventral scales keeled; femoral pores large, without expanded cores; no enlarged postnasals; male.

The type specimen of *P. brevicornis* has been eviscerated and the limb girdles are cut through, so that the limbs are not anchored. This makes it difficult to measure the various trunk dimensions with accuracy. Some approximate measurements in millimeters are listed below.

Tail (incomplete).....	23
Snout to anus.....	75
Hind limb.....	44
Fore limb.....	34
Snout to fore limb.....	24
Width of head:	
Across superciliary ridge.....	11
Between tympana.....	16

After the receipt of the excellent information cited above, there seems to be no particular doubt but that *P. brevicornis* is in reality only a mutilated specimen of the commonest horned lizard of Texas—*P. cornutum*. Prior to its death the type individual was kept alive in the Gardens of the Zoological Society of London and it seems entirely logical to believe that the creature may have received its abrasions by rubbing against some such material as sand grains or screen wire while being held in captivity in the United States prior to its shipment to London, during its long journey across the ocean, or even later at its temporary quarters in the Zoological Park.

LITERATURE CITED.

BOULENGER, E. G.

1916. A New Lizard of the Genus *Phrynosoma*, Recently Living in the Society's Gardens. Proc. Zool. Soc. London, p. 537, pl. 1, figs. 1-3 (*P. brevicornis*).

²"The pholidosis of the snout agrees quite well with that of a specimen of *P. cornutum* from Duval County, Texas, even to the presence of an enlarged tubercle in the middle of the interorbital region. There is also an agreement in the two specimens in the type of ventral scutellation."—H. W. P.